

Continuing success



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal Elder Kenneth Foster is an ongoing success story of the Tribe's Vocational Rehabilitation Work Experience Program. Because of the program and help from Jon George, Tribal member and the Vocational Rehabilitation specialist, and Chris Garcia, Employment & Training specialist, both at the Tribe's Portland Area Office, Foster has now been working at the Portland Nursery Co. in Portland for four seasons, including the last two years as a full-time worker. He started at Portland Nursery as a three-month work experience employee and when the program came to an end he was offered full-time employment, which he eagerly accepted in 2009. Two years later, Foster is still employed there and knows how to do just about everything at the nursery, except for the office work. He started working in the production area and has since learned a lot more about other areas by taking it upon himself to learn by helping his fellow workers. He even helps train new employees. "Kenny is a valuable member of our team," said Suzy Hancock, the nursery's general manager.

Ballots were scheduled to go out Oct. 26 to voters

VOTE continued
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of the election on June 16.

The all-or-nothing proposal would change the following requirements for Tribal enrollment:

- It would reduce the relinquishment time from five years to two years that a person must wait to become a member of the Grand Ronde Tribe after officially leaving another Tribe;
- It would eliminate the requirement that new members have a parent on a Tribal membership roll at the time of their birth or at the time of their application;
- It would redefine Grand Ronde blood as "all Indian blood derived from a direct ancestor whose name validly appears on any roll or record of Grand Ronde members prepared by the Department of Interior or the Tribe prior to or since the effective date of this Constitution."
- And it would establish an annual quota of no more than 5 percent and no less than 2 percent of currently enrolled members may be accepted as new members, excluding newborns.

On Sept. 14, Tribal Council voted 4-3 to continue with the election process and rebuffed an effort to put it on hold and seek an advisory

vote on whether Tribal members wanted the proposal bundled or as four separate votes.

Tribal members who will be at least 18 years of age on Nov. 15 had until Monday, Oct. 17, to register to vote in the election. Tribal members who did not specifically register to vote will not be eligible to cast a ballot.

For the amendment to change the Tribal Constitution at least 30 percent of registered Tribal members — 439 — must cast ballots and at least two-thirds of those voting have to approve it. If this year's voter turnout mirrors 2008 at 78 percent, then 1,141 Tribal members will cast votes and 761 would have to vote yes to amend the Constitution.

Ballots were scheduled to be sent out Wednesday, Oct. 26, to all registered voters. The ballots must be returned to the BIA in the postage-paid return envelope before noon Tuesday, Nov. 15.

This is the third time since 1983's Restoration that Tribal members are voting on enrollment requirements. In 1999, Tribal members approved tightening up enrollment requirements and in 2008, one of three proposals — the current five-year relinquishment period — received the two-thirds support necessary to be written into the Tribal Constitution. ■

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Community of Oregon

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Matthew Thomas with an elk he harvested on behalf of the Tribe.

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